

Trash Bags

Covered Products

This specification covers disposable plastic bags and can liners used primarily for janitorial applications such as solid waste disposal, recycling, and medical waste disposal. It also includes bio-based plastic and paper bags designed to collect food and/or yard waste for composting.

Definitions

Bioplastic is a plastic derived from renewable bio-based materials (most often corn that is manufactured into polylactic acid), such as vegetable oil, corn starch, potato starch, or pea starch, that can replace traditional plastics derived from petroleum.

Compostable means that all of the materials in a product are capable of undergoing biological decomposition in an appropriate (e.g. commercial or municipal) compost facility as part of an available program in a safe and timely manner (no more than 180 days), such that the material is not visually distinguishable and breaks down into carbon dioxide, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass suitable for use as a soil amendment (e.g. compost, soil-conditioning material, mulch) leaving no toxic residue.

Perfluorinated Chemical (PFC) means any perfluorinated or polyfluorinated chemical, including but not limited to long- and short-chain fluorinated alkyl compounds, fluorinated sulfonate compounds, fluorinated polyethers, and fluorinated polymers.

Polylactic Acid (PLA): A clear bioplastic that resembles common petrochemical-based plastics such as polyethylene and polypropylene.

Standard Setting and Certification Programs

Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI): A professional membership association of key individuals and groups from government, industry and academia, which promotes the use of – and certifies – a wide array of compostable products including, but not limited to food service ware. The BPI will certify any materials or products which can be

demonstrated (via scientifically proven techniques) to be completely biodegradable in municipal or commercial aerobic composting facilities.

Cradle to Cradle Innovation Institute is a multi-attribute eco-label that evaluates a wide range of products across five categories of human and environmental health. The standard includes material health, material reutilization, renewable energy and carbon management, and water stewardship. For more information, visit the [Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute website](#).

European Union Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) represents the interests of German stakeholders worldwide. According to an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany, DIN is recognized as the national standards body for Germany. Standards contribute to sustainability by taking occupational health and safety and environmental protection into consideration. For more information, visit the [DIN](#) website.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has developed a set of Principles and Criteria for forest management that is applicable to all FSC-certified forests throughout the world. There are 10 Principles and 57 Criteria that address legal issues, indigenous rights, labor rights, multiple benefits, and environmental impacts surrounding forest management. For more information visit the FSC website at: <https://us.fsc.org/en-us>

Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) is a third-party entity which verifies the recycled content claims manufacturers make about their products. SCS does not establish a minimum percentage of recycled content that a product must have. Instead, it simply verifies what the manufacturer claims about the percentage of post-consumer or total recycled content which a product has.

UL EcoLogo is an independent, third party standard setting and certification program that follows the Guiding Principles and Procedures for North American Type I Environmental Labeling adopted by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO 14024). Since its establishment in 1988, EcoLogo has been recognized or referenced in hundreds of specifications and standards. It has standards for cleaning products, sanitary paper, trash bags, adhesives, and more. UL EcoLogo certified products are listed on the UL SPOT database at: www.ul.com/SPOT .

US Environmental Protection Agency's *Comprehensive Procurement Guideline* is part of EPA's Sustainable Materials Management initiative that promotes a system approach to reducing materials use and the associated environmental impacts over the materials' entire life cycle. For a list of certified products and how to add your company to the CPG directory, visit <https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guideline-cpg-program>

Vincotte Scientific Certification Systems was an independent testing institute based in Belgium, but has since been taken over by an Austrian company that certifies biodegradable, compostable, and bio-based products in an integrated program called TÜV Austria Belgium. Their bio-based certification system is based on the European standard EN 16785-1 which enables independent assessment of claims on the bio-based content of products. Bio-based content refers to biomass, not only to biobased carbon. For a list of certified products or to request your product to be certified, visit <http://www.okcompost.be/en/home/>

Specifications

All types of trash bags must meet the first set of specifications provided below. In addition, certain types of bags must meet specific requirements which apply to their category. These specifications harmonize with specifications included in the multi-state purchasing contract for *Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products, Programs, Equipment and Supplies* (also known as FAC85).

All Trash Bags

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase trash bags which:

1. Meet New York State's guidelines which restrict toxics in packaging (established in Environmental Conservation Law section 37-0205), meaning that the bags themselves and any of their components do not contain inks, dyes, pigments, adhesives, stabilizers, or any other additives to which any lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium is intentionally added, or do not contain

incidental concentrations of lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium which together are greater than 100 parts per million by weight (0.01%).

2. Contain no intentionally added antimicrobial ingredients or chlorinated compounds (e.g., polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or vinylidene chloride).

Affected entities are strongly encouraged to purchase trash bags which:

- Have recycled content as well as other environmental and health attributes that are verified by an independent entity. Examples of third-party entities that certify recycled content and/or other environmental and health attributes of trash and recycling bags include UL EcoLogo (under [UL 126: 2012 Standard for Sustainability for Plastic Film Products](#)), [Scientific Certification Systems](#) (SCS), and [Cradle to Cradle Innovation Institute](#).
- Contain no intentionally added fragrances or phthalates.

Plastic Trash Bags

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase plastic trash bags which meet the following specifications. These requirements do not apply to plastic medical waste bags.

1. Contain at least 10% post-consumer recycled content.. This requirement complies with the US Environmental Protection Agency's *Comprehensive Procurement Guideline for Trash Bags*. An overview of this recycled-content guideline can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guidelines-non-paper-office-products>.
2. Are not labeled "oxo-biodegradable" or "oxo-degradable." If plastic bags are destined for disposal at landfills or waste-to-energy facilities, the claim of degradability is invalid, and truly degradable bags are not desirable in recycling systems.
3. Have a maximum thickness of 10 microns or less, if the bag is smaller than 13 gallons.

4. Must not contain intentionally added antimicrobial ingredients, chlorinated compounds (Ex. PVC), or fragrances.

Affected entities are strongly encouraged to purchase plastic trash bags which:

- Have 30% or more post-consumer recycled content.

Disposable Medical Waste Bags

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase disposable medical waste bags which meet the following specifications.

- All medical waste bags shall be free of cadmium. Bidders and vendors must indicate whether the bags they are offering are free of cadmium.
- Medical waste bags used as primary containers (i.e., bags that come in direct contact with the medical waste) shall be plastic, red in color, impervious to moisture, marked prominently with the universal warning sign or the word “biohazard,” and be of a strength sufficient to resist ripping, tearing, or bursting under normal conditions of use and handling as required by current U.S. Department of Transportation regulations.

Affected entities are encouraged to purchase medical waste bags which:

- Have recycled content.

Compostable Organic Waste Bags

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase compostable bioplastic bags which are:

1. Certified compostable (in a commercial composting facility) by the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI), the Composting Manufacturing Alliance, or another organization under an equivalent or stronger compostability standard (e.g., European Union DIN or Vincotte).
2. Have the BPI or equivalent logo as well as the word “COMPOSTABLE” printed on the bag.

Paper Trash Bags

Affected entities shall, to the maximum extent practicable, purchase paper trash bags which meet the following specifications:

1. All paper trash bags designed for janitorial and landscaping uses shall be made of wet-strength, unbleached material.
2. Paper bags lined with bioplastic must be certified compostable (in a commercial composting facility) by BPI or another organization under an equivalent or stronger standard (e.g., EU DIN or Vincotte).
3. All liners must be compliant with CONEG's Toxics in Packaging Guidelines and may not have a California Proposition 65 warning for cancer or reproductive toxicity.
4. Liners may not contain any fluorinated grease or water-repellant compounds
5. Must contain a minimum 50% post-consumer recycled content.

Affected entities are encouraged to purchase paper trash bags which:

- Are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) if they contain virgin fiber.

Vendor Statements and Verification of Compliance

Affected entities should ask bidders or vendors to declare in the bid sheet or other appropriate documentation that the products they offer meet the requirements (and, if appropriate, encouragements) contained in this specification.

Bidders and vendors must indicate the percentage of post-consumer recycled content (PCRC) and total recycled content (TRC) in each product they offer for sale on New York State contracts.

For disposable medical waste bags: bidders and vendors must indicate whether each product they offer is free of cadmium.

For compostable Bioplastic Bags: Bidders and vendors must indicate (and be able to verify) whether each product they offer is certified by BPI or another organization under an equivalent or stronger standard.

For paper trash bags: Bidders and vendors must indicate whether each product they offer is on the Cedar Grove or BPI lists, and whether it is certified by BPI or another organization under an equivalent or stronger standard.

Packaging

Packaging shall comply with Environmental Conservation Law section 37-0205.

Packaging shall not contain inks, dyes, pigments, adhesives, stabilizers, or any other additives to which any lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium is intentionally added or contain incidental concentrations of lead, cadmium, mercury, or hexavalent chromium which together are greater than 100 parts per million by weight (0.01%).

New York State encourages affected entities to adopt the following:

- The use of bulk packaging.
- The use of reusable packaging.
- The use of innovative packaging that reduces the weight of packaging, reduces packaging waste, or utilizes packaging that is a component of the product.
- That all packaging remains the property of the supplier and not become the property of the affected state entity under any circumstance or condition. The vendor shall certify that the packaging material will be reused, recycled, or composted, and managed in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Packaging that maximizes recycled content and/or meets or exceeds the minimum post-consumer content level for packaging in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.
- Packaging that is recyclable or compostable.